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ABSTRACT

Visiting a historic site provides a rich stimulus for all kinds of work in English. This handbook offers a range of ideas for work on site for teachers of all Key Stages. The handbook suggests activities which will deepen students' engagement and enable the potential of a visit to be explored within the context of English, and to deliver history and other subjects. Strategies in the handbook can also be used to fulfill the requirements of literacy instruction, and exercises undertaken on site can inspire a wide variety of activities back in school. It notes that creativity in writing and drama, which can be challenging to stimulate in the classroom, flows more easily when it is the outcome of close observation and a feeling of involvement with the subject matter. Additionally, it points out that the experience of different surroundings presents opportunities for students to practice social skills which can legitimately be claimed for English: listening carefully, responding appropriately, and, at the end of the day, writing letters of thanks. The handbook is mainly about giving suggestions for structures and methods for work out of school, covering Key Stages 1 to 4. Many of the suggestions in the handbook for work in one of the elements of literacy, like reading, have a natural follow-up in another, like a written or spoken presentation. The handbook is divided into the following sections: "About This Book"; "Word Collecting"; "Speaking and Listening"; "Drama"; "Reading"; "Non Fiction Writing"; "Persuasive Techniques"; "Creative Writing"; "Interviewing"; and "Bibliography and Resources." (BT)

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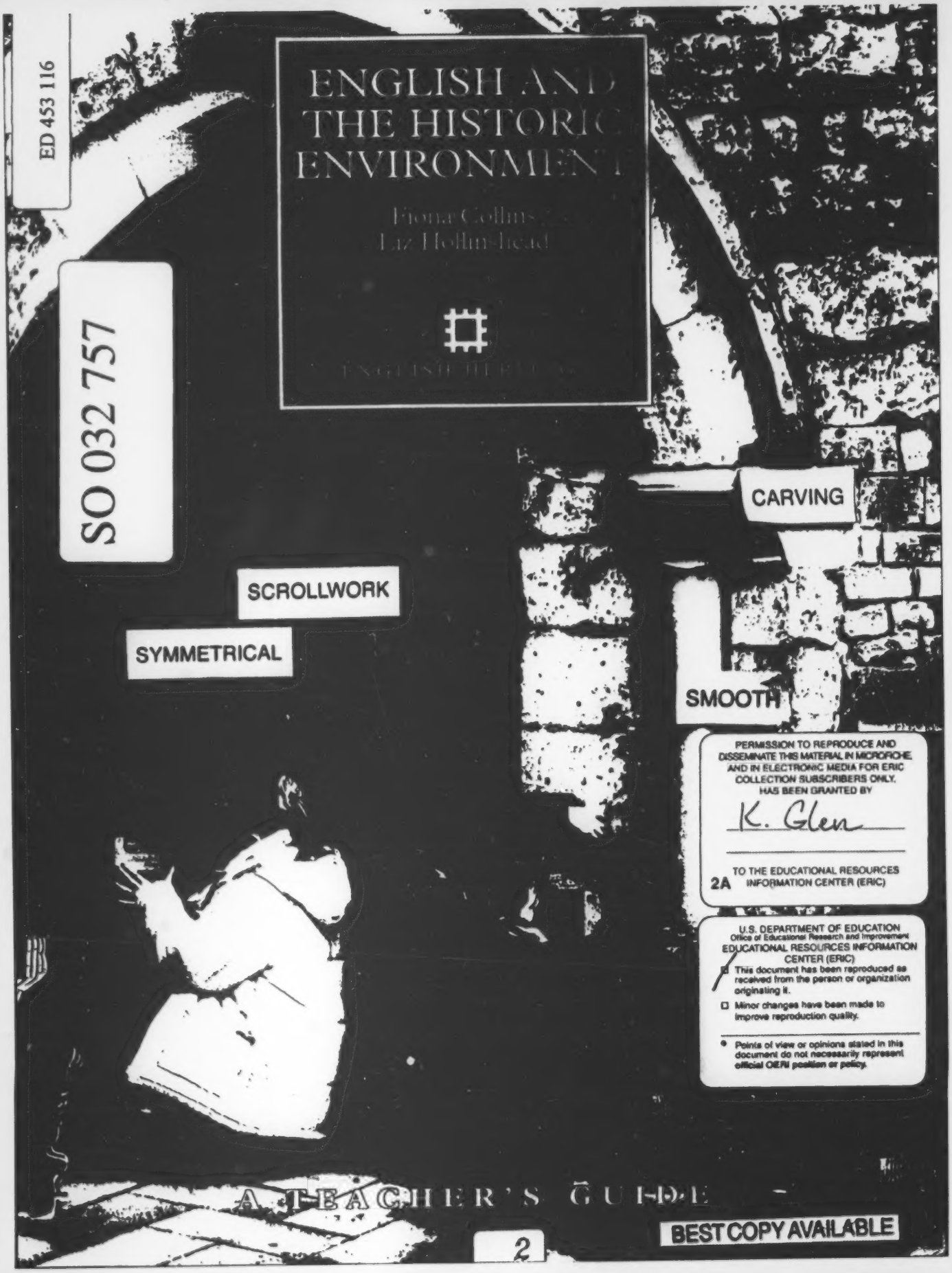

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A TEACHER'S GUIDE

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Books in the *Education on Site* series are written especially for teachers to help them make the best use of the historic environment.

Series editor: Mike Corbishley

Cover illustrations

Front cover: The local parish church being used for English work by Bolsover Junior School, Derbyshire.

Back cover: Fiona Collins using storytelling to help pupils understand Chiswick House, London.

Edited and produced by Liz Hollinshead
Illustrations by Michael J Richardson and Coral Sealey
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ENGLISH
AND THE
HISTORIC
ENVIRONMENT

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Images like this can be useful in composing stories. Taranius, a Celtic god. Corbridge, Hadrian's Wall

ABOUT THIS BOOK

Visiting an historic site provides a rich stimulus for all kinds of work in English. This handbook offers a range of ideas for work on site for teachers of all Key Stages. It suggests activities which will deepen pupils' engagement and enable the potential of a visit to be explored within the context of English, and, if you want it, to deliver History, and other subjects. Strategies can also be used to fulfil the requirements of the Literacy Hour, and exercises undertaken on site can inspire a wide variety of activities back in school. Creativity in writing and drama, which can be challenging to stimulate in the classroom, flows more easily when it is the outcome of close observation and a feeling of involvement with the subject matter.

The experience of different surroundings will present opportunities for pupils to practise social skills which can be legitimately claimed for English: listening carefully and politely, responding appropriately, and, at the end of the day, writing letters of thanks.

This book is mainly about giving suggestions for structures and methods for work out of school, covering Key Stages 1 to 4. The tasks are easy to mix and adapt to your own specific Key Stage and circumstances. Choose just one or two of the activities to do on your visit - pupils generally have keener perceptions but less concentration out of the classroom.

Much work in English is a combination of speaking, listening, writing, and reading. Many of the suggestions in this book for work in one of these elements, like reading, have a natural follow-up in another, like a written or spoken presentation. Often, for the sake of simplicity in the following chapters, when describing work in one element, the possibilities for outcomes in another have not been followed up, but you will recognise that the potential is there if you wish to follow it through.

Working in groups or pairs involves speaking and listening to each other, as well as recording information.

WORD COLLECTING

LOOK AROUND

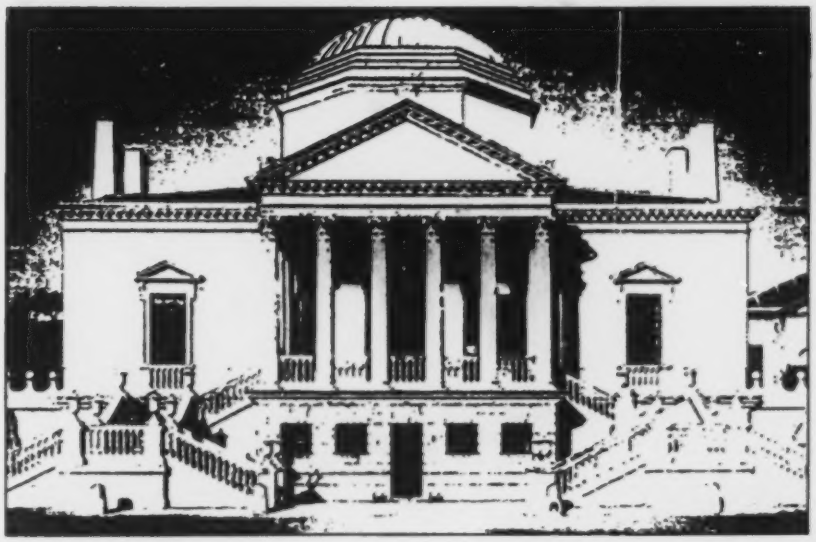
This is a useful exercise to familiarize pupils with a new place and gets some of the first excitement out of their systems.

■ Give out numbered photographs, (taken on your planning visit), and which can be fairly obscure, like close-ups of detail, or shots taken from an unusual angle.

■ Ask pupils to find that place, and then write down the first five words that they can think of to describe it.

■ Alternatively, photocopy ground plans, with locations marked on. Ask pupils to go to each, individually or in pairs, and record five words that describe it.

Key Stage 1 pupils should be taken to the different places in small groups, accompanied by an adult. Each pupil can contribute a word, which the helper records for them.



Chiswick House, London.

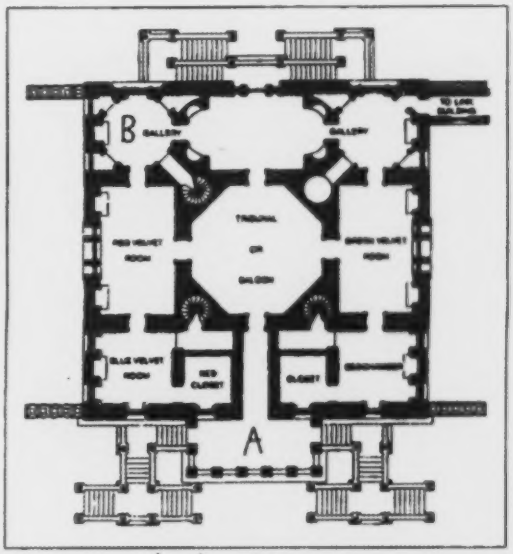
heavy uncomfortable

curly wave-like

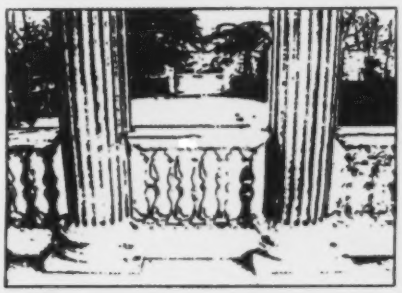
regular never-ending satisfying

defiant crumpled

First floor plan



ordered neat smart



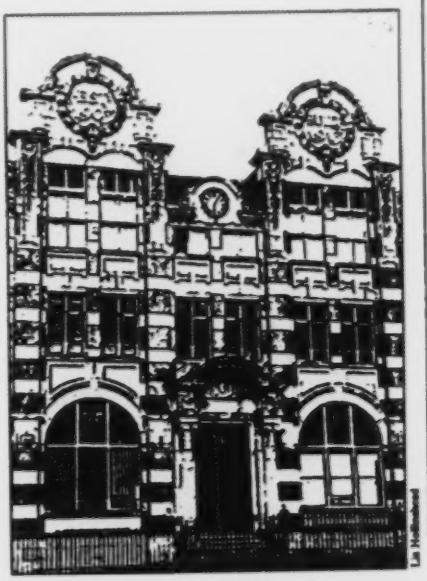
A unyeilding shapely

empty cool imposing

B rich spare

I SPY

Playing I Spy with Key Stage 1 pupils will increase observation skills as well as generating a list of words for a helper to record. Later, in the classroom, words can be sorted into categories of increasing difficulty to read or spell. Make a wall chart using the outline of the place visited: divide it horizontally into three, and allocate the words to the levels in rising order of difficulty. When pupils know them all, they can add a flag on the roof, or a cloud, with their names on.

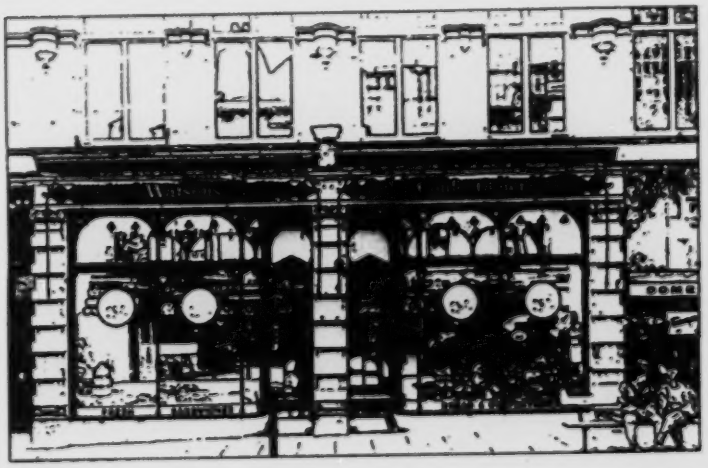


Barret's Building, Northampton.

I spy words with these sounds: a, e, i, o, u, ee, ai, ie oa, oo.

A variation of I Spy is to provide pupils with a list of short vowel sounds and long vowel phonemes, and to ask for words on site which contain them.

The lists can easily be adapted to different abilities.



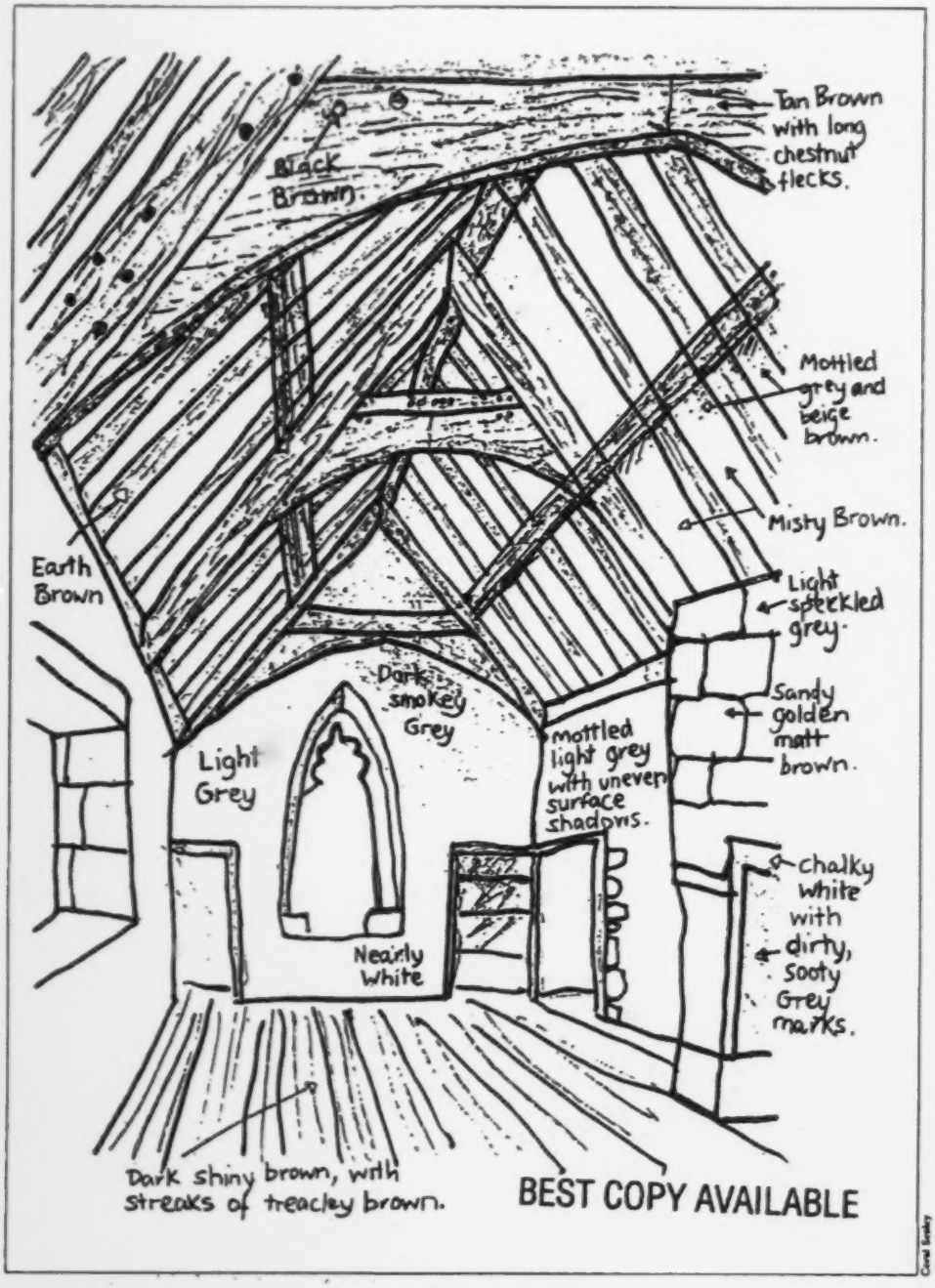
FIND AND MATCH

Choose words which you want your class to think about, perhaps from a source which you have been reading together, like the guidebook (portico, column, balustrade), or a reference work (ornate, classical), or a story (gloomy, turret). Copy them onto individual strips of paper, and on site, send pairs of pupils off with several strips to find the places which fit the words best.

For older pupils you can make this harder by using words in which the meanings are almost, but not quite, the same. For example, hard and strong, airy and spacious, flamboyant and ornate. Another layer can be added to this by providing strips with comparative and superlative words: big, bigger, biggest; skilful, less skilful, least skilful; ornate, more ornate, most ornate.

SHADES OF GREY

Ask pupils to choose an area, then make a pencil drawing, adding labels to describe the exact colours in sufficient detail for someone else to paint their sketch accurately in colour. Invented words are fine, if they convey the required meaning. For example, brown may be more exactly defined not just as light, dark or medium, but with the addition of rusty, reddish, grainy, golden, milk chocolate, speckled, muddy; chestnut, shiny, tan or biscuit. This helps pupils realise that words can be very precise tools to communication, and they can start to use them in their descriptions of the rest of the site. Key Stage 1 pupils will need an adult to help them to record their words.


Tan Brown with long chestnut flecks.
Black Brown.
Mottled grey and beige brown.
Misty Brown.
Earth Brown
Light speckled grey.
Dark smokey Grey
Sandy golden matt brown.
Light Grey
Mottled light grey with uneven surface shadows.
chalky white with dirty, sooty Grey marks.
Nearly White
Dark shiny brown, with streaks of treacley brown.
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Carol Bentley

Labeling a pencil sketch with exact shades of colour encourages precision.

SOUNDS LIKE

Sights and sounds on an out of school visit provide a good opportunity for looking at words which sound like their meanings (onomatopoeic words). Ask pupils to list as many words as they can: they can make words up as long as they are appropriate. For example, the wind sighs, hisses, howls, whistles, slams through the ruin.

PLEASE TOUCH

Check that touching the object or building is permitted and safe. Working in pairs, one pupil carefully leads the other, eyes closed, to a location with an interesting texture. The 'blind' pupil feels and describes it using five words, which the other pupil records, and then they swap roles and repeat the process. Test out the descriptions by asking another pair (who have been working in a different part of the site) to find the surfaces described (help by giving a limited choice).

glassy
sharp-edged
smooth
crumbly in-between
irregular

worn
gritty
lumpy in lines
in big blocks
rough

PARTS OF SPEECH

Devise a survey sheet, and ask pairs to hunt for nouns, adjectives, and/or verbs and/or adverbs, which all begin with a given letter of the alphabet. You can frame this in the context of making an ABC book for young children. Ignore Q, X, Y and Z!

	adjective	noun	verb	adverb
The	empty	engine-room	echoed	eerily
The	still	stones	slept	silently
The	tall	turret	towered	threateningly
The	wooden	window	wobbled	worryingly

DESCRIBING THE PLACE

Ask pupils to mark three columns on a piece of paper headed: I see, I hear, and I feel (as in how this place makes me feel).
Send them to several different areas to write down five different words per place under each heading. If you want to use their words for creative work set in a period in the past, then ask pupils to think up the appropriate historical equivalent to the words on their lists. For example, if they see and hear cars now, they would probably have seen horses in the past and heard the clip clop of hooves and the jingling of bridles.

I see	I hear	I feel
1	1	1
2	2	2
3	3	3
4	4	4
5	5	5
Would I have seen it then? If not, what might I have seen instead?	Would I have heard it then? If not, what might I have heard instead?	Would I have felt it then? If not, what might I have felt instead?
1	1	1
2	2	2
3	3	3
4	4	4
5	5	5

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EMOTIVE WORDS

Ask half the class to write down words which make the site sound appealing, and the rest to find words which show it as an unattractive or frightening place. Go through the words deciding which are the most powerful and why. What images are associated with the words which give them their power?

Key Stage 1 and 2 pupils will find it easier to use two contrasting areas of the same site.

Key Stage 3 and 4 pupils can be challenged to find both attractive and unappealing words for the same view.

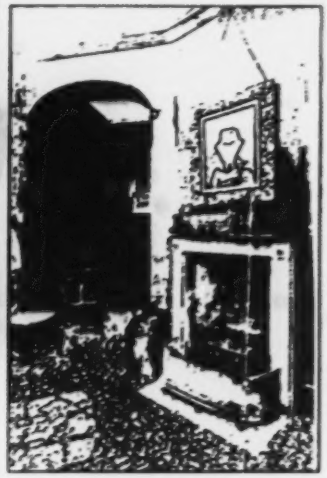
mousy (not used for a long time)

creepy (spiders,)

ghostly (someone watching you)

Boscobel House, Shropshire.

cosy (warm, small and friendly)



welcoming (cheerful, happy)

clean (tidy, in order)

homely (nothing to be afraid of)

intriguing (has secrets you want to find out about)

quaint (idiosyncratic, very English)

rural (ideal of country days when life was more peaceful, romantic and uncomplicated and the sun shone

pretty sparkling white (reminder of Mediterranean houses with the sun reflecting off them, associated feeling of warm sun)

solid (secure, safe)

quiet (restful, calm, soothing)

Boscobel House, Shropshire.

remote (isolated - images of nobody hearing or knowing you are there, no hope of rescue if threatened, and unfriendly)

narrow (feeling of being closed in)

mysterious (hint of danger)

staring (blank-faced, unresponsive, uninviting, frightening)

dead white (lifeless, hiding its true nature, perhaps hiding decay)

unyielding (hard, uncaring)

silent (dead, sinister)

WORD COLLECTING

Create posters for the site, using evocative words. Give each pupil a strip of paper with a word or phrase on it, ask them to find a location, feature or unusual view of something that exemplifies the word. They need to think up two other words or phrases to describe their place, or compose a strap-line for the poster. They can make a sketch for the poster, or better still, if you have access to Polaroid or digital cameras, take a picture. Create the posters back in class, using computers to generate appropriate size and type of printing for the words. Older pupils can practise desk-top publishing techniques.

mysterious
haunting
fabulous
romantic
peaceful
fascinating
grotesque
imposing
exotic
dominating
intriguing
welcoming
rugged
tranquil
lively
alluring
inviting

The Dining Room door at Eltham Palace, London.

ON THE WAY HOME

You may have come across words which are not in frequent use to describe parts of the site. These are often the legacy of an earlier period, and can be used to introduce pupils to the way language has developed. Many of our words have Latin roots, originating from the medieval period when Latin was the official language. For example, from the root 'aqua' comes many words associated with water: aqueduct, aquatic, aquarium, aqueous, sub-aqua, aquamarine.

If you have encountered such words during your visit, use them as the basis for a word game on the coach home: see how many words containing a given root pupils can think up.

Find the word derived from the Latin root

navis = a ship. Part of the church often has a massive wooden roof, looks like an upturned ship.

ala = wing

altari = high place

trans = across

vesta = garment

Sanctify
-to make holy

sanction - permission or penalty

sanctimonious - pretending to be holy

SANCTUS

holy, forbidden

SPEAKING AND LISTENING

Out of school visits require pupils to listen closely to instructions for work tasks and practical arrangements, and to respond verbally in new social situations. Working in groups is a good idea, as it can promote purposeful discussion, as long as everybody knows exactly what they are doing. Group work is also useful for setting different levels of task, and lends itself to informal spoken presentations.

GIVING A GUIDED TOUR

Send groups off to different parts of the site to find out as much as they can. Use all available sources and skills: guidebooks, interpretation panels, observation and deduction. Each group should decide what the most important facts are, then jot down simple headings to jog their memory as they act as guides for the rest of the class. The information can be developed into an audio guide by:

- setting a time limit on each contribution and recording it. Each group member contributes one sentence each, or one person acts as spokesperson
- adding background sounds for added interest: period music, (needs to be researched and added back in class); improvised sounds to mimic the noises which may have been heard in the locations (pans in the kitchen, tea cups in the drawing room); present day sounds - visitors, birdsong, which needs to be recorded on site
- adding an introduction
- deciding on the route
- adding directions from one location to the next
- deciding on operating instructions (need to turn machine off between locations).

PROBLEM SOLVING

Problem solving requires pupils to find the best possible outcome to a given situation. Done as a group activity, it revolves around investigation, collaboration and negotiation. It demands listening to others' points of view, and coming to decisions about how to resolve the problem. Assigning a fictitious role adds interest.

If you are visiting an historic site, you can put pupils in role as architects who have to design a new shop in the style of the rest of the site. They need to decide on a location, building design, and interior fitments inspired by features at the site.

Problem
A television company wants to shoot a scene from a Victorian costume drama in your High Street. You are set designers who have been asked to make a report on which section of street should be used, and what will need to be done to make it look Victorian. All alterations must be reversible.

↓

Discuss and decide on steps to solve problem. Negotiate and allocate individuals to tasks. Note when to regroup.

First task.
Do a survey of street to note what modern items can be masked or removed.

↓

Report back. Discuss and decide what section of street is best to use. Allocate next task. Note when to regroup.

Second task
Note all the things that can be added to create a Victorian scene.

↓

Report back. Negotiate contents and format of report. Allocate responsibility for different sections.

Present report,
explaining actions, reasons, and finished result.

WORD PICTURES

Describing an area to someone who cannot see it, such as in a radio programme, or to someone with impaired vision, calls for a precise picture in words. If you have enough time, send pupils on a dummy run in groups, and ask them for descriptions of a feature or room from which the other groups sketch what they think the place looks like. In this way, it can be immediately understood that 'big' and 'small' are not particularly useful as descriptions, but that 'six paces' or 'three metres high and twelve across' or 'as tall as a double decker bus' give a more exact picture. Similarly, detail is needed in describing individual features and their locations: 'the room has a window' tells the reader a lot less than 'the room has a bay window with diamond panes; it takes up half the area of the front wall'.

Ask pupils to prepare material for a radio programme about the site and make a list of the things they feel need to be included. It should look something like this:

- type (open place, room, corridor, roof top, etc)
- ruined? roofed?
- size
- windows and doors (number, size, position)
- predominant colours
- any evidence of heating and lighting
- wall, floor and ceiling - materials, coverings, design, textures
- contents. Are they arranged in a particular way?
- atmosphere - light, gloomy, airy, cold, silent, draughty?
- overall impression - depressing, comfortable, bright, elegant.

Then set pairs or groups working on different areas. They can use the list to decide what they want to say and then record it directly onto a dictaphone or tape recorder, if you have them. Otherwise, recordings can be done later in school.

Go to each area and replay or read out the descriptions to the others. Do they think someone who cannot see the area would get a good idea of what it is like? Why? Why not? Work may need to be revised and re-recorded.

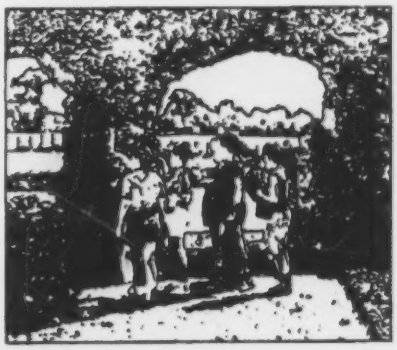
Other elements can be added to make a straight description more interesting, like the sounds which permeate through now, or those which might have been heard when the place was in use. For example, if you are looking at a dining room, there would have been the sound of cutlery and crockery being used, tea or wine being poured, a fire crackling, voices chatting, perhaps chairs being moved back, or sounds of appreciation at a new course being brought.

Suitable snatches of conversation can be worked on in a drama session. Alternatively, atmosphere can be added by choosing period or evocative music. Pupils can work on this, either by recording the background noise on tape, and adding their spoken pieces over it, or writing down what they can hear or might have heard, and make plans for reproducing it for recording later in school.

JUST LISTENING

Simple listening tasks include:

- remembering and following oral instructions for a route around part of the site
- listening to all the sounds from within the site, and then from outside. Imagining what their historical equivalents were
- identifying sounds which offer a positive image of the site, like birdsong, or period music (sometimes played in furnished houses to give atmosphere), and sounds which are intrusive, like traffic or people talking loudly
- listening to echo and other qualities of the human voice in different parts of the site; inside, outside, under an archway, calling up a chimney, inside a roofed room, inside an unroofed room.



Practical points about tape recording equipment

Dictaphones are the most practical recorders to use on site. Spare batteries and blank tapes are essential back-up equipment! One dictaphone per group of four pupils is an ideal number. A larger cassette player is best supervised by an adult and used in one place, with pupils coming back to record at a central point, chosen for its suitability as an ad-hoc tape studio (relatively quiet and away from people, roofed, not too much echo from walls or ceiling, soft floor covering). Secondary pupils could try out and evaluate different kinds of equipment as part of media studies work. Practise using the equipment in school before using it on a visit.

PRESENTING

If you want pupils to give an oral presentation, firstly set up a tight focus for their investigations, for example, by giving a set of questions, or by asking them to find out about a specified area.

Encourage concise presentations by imposing a time limit. Allow pupils to make headings from which to speak, or simple notes. By way of light relief, practise speaking to a set time by playing the 'just a minute game', in which you give pupils a topic related to the site about which they should speak without any repetition for one minute, or, if you are feeling kind, 30 seconds.

PUTTING IT CLEARLY

To get older pupils to present a complex argument clearly and logically it will be better to have them working individually, or in pairs. For example, you can ask them to work out the chronology of the site - not the exact dates, but the order in which buildings or features were added. For this they need to look for blocked-up doors and windows, or different sizes or shapes of window, try to work out why they are like that, and explain the reason to the rest of the class. This needs logical thinking and an ordered presentation: an advantage of doing this in pairs is that it is less intimidating as there is mutual support in the presentation, with one partner listening carefully while the other presents the argument, and at the end including or expanding points which may have been omitted.

TALKING IT THROUGH

Standing up in front of others to debate a point is challenging. Introduce your pupils to the techniques involved by using a site as a subject which can be objectively investigated. Use an existing situation, or think up an imaginary one, which would affect the place you are studying. For example, the closing of a vehicular access to a street of old houses in town, or plans to build a new twenty-storey office block next to a castle.

Pupils will need to investigate and record:

- what the place is like now
- what effects the proposal will have
- who gains from the change
- who loses by it
- what the place will be like when the change has happened
- what they feel about it.

Have a class debate, where pupils take on the roles of the different interested parties. For example, if your topic is the pedestrianisation of an historic street, arguments can be presented from the viewpoints of:

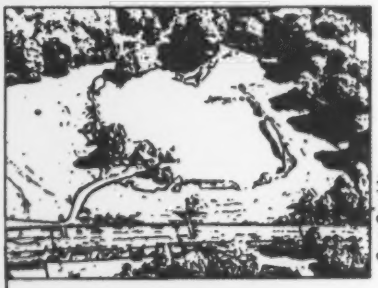
- a householder with a car and a young family who will be inconvenienced by having to park the car in a back lane
- a council marketing manager who wants to develop the town as an historic attraction and who feels that tourists will be attracted by a quiet, safe, pedestrianised area
- an owner whose old and architecturally important house is being shaken and weakened by passing lorries
- a family who moved in before the road became so busy, and who are afraid to let their children walk to school along the busy road. One child's asthma is exacerbated by car fumes
- an energetic but mobility-impaired businesswoman who relies on her car, which she will have to park some way from the house
- a shop owner who needs access for delivery vans.

Imaginary situations might be that a hospital, housing estate or airport is planned for part of an historic site, or it is being turned into a theme park with reconstructed buildings. Each scenario will have its supporters and detractors.

Alternatively set the debate in the past, and provide information and role cards.

What is it like for the residents who live in a pedestrianised area? Steep Hill, Lincoln.

Historically speaking...
Berkhamsted Castle was the subject of controversy in the nineteenth century, when the Birmingham to London Railway laid its lines through part of the medieval castle's massive outer moats. This not only destroyed part of an irreplaceable ancient monument, but the railway embankment separated the village from the castle, and destroyed the tranquil atmosphere with noise and smoky pollution.



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Berkhamsted Castle now, with the railway line cutting through the outer defensive ditches.

The Hertfordshire Herald ½d

More problems at castle

The lodging house shortage is still not solved for many of the 700 workmen employed on building the railway line at Berkhamsted, and it now seems that they have an even greater problem to overcome at the castle where work is going on round the clock to fill the moat and provide a firm base for the new railway embankments.
Groups of villagers have gathered around to protest against the plans to create a huge embankment between the village and castle.

They are complaining that the proposed route will cut the village in half, destroying the close-knit community. One onlooker argued that there is a regular service by horse coach from Berkhamsted to London, so there is no real need of a train. The coach fare is ten shillings for a seat inside and six shillings outside, and it certainly seems likely that unless the rail fares are much cheaper than this no one will change to using the train, even though the journey is faster.

Role cards

Frederick Homes
Your farm is next to the castle. The cows will be frightened by the noise of the trains, and milk yield could drop, causing you loss of income. Your land will be cut off from the town, giving you a long, time-consuming detour to cross the railway line in order to sell the milk.

Janet Brown
You are married to a local villager employed as a site foreman. He needs the job and you look forward to the better facilities which the town will have if more people move here, like better schools for your children, more shops, and a library.

Benjamin Brook
You are a local historian, who wants to preserve the castle because it has played an important part in the nation's history. You feel that the railway could be sited elsewhere, which would be cheaper anyway, considering the problems caused by the poor drainage at Berkhamsted.

Clarissa Hope-Winstock
You own a large house near to the castle, where your family has lived in peace and quiet for three generations. The railway will spoil your view, and replace it by a noisy railway track and busy station. The vibrations from the trains will probably damage the house.

Ellie Headley
You are a villager with four children. You are frightened that the increased traffic passing in front of the school may cause an accident. There will also be more people using the public house, and you fear an increase in drunkenness and rowdy behaviour.

James Wilson
You are a young business man working in London. You want to live in the country, and you hope that some modern low-cost housing will be built, perhaps on Farmer Homes' land, once the railway is established, so that you can move with your young family.

STORYTELLING

Many of the skills of storytelling are those already used in teaching: reading aloud, giving oral instructions, and using gesture and body language to clarify meaning.

All places have their own histories which can be presented through storytelling in a stimulating way. Source material can be found in guidebooks, reference works or tourist information leaflets on the area. One possibility for storytelling is to use the site as the setting for a traditional tale, such as Mossycoat, weaving details about the site into the story, or for recounting the daily routine of an ordinary inhabitant, or for telling the life history of a famous person associated with the place.

The opportunities for language work arising from a storytelling session at an historic site are rich, encouraging a wide range of oral work to be undertaken by the pupils during the visit.

Exercises can include:

- listening to a story and deciding with a partner how the story can be enlivened with specific

Mossycoat

Mossycoat is an English Gypsy version of the Cinderella story.

The heroine leaves home to seek her fortune, taking with her three gifts from a tinker who has been trying to court her - a gold dress, a dress of all the colours of the birds of the air, and a pair of white silk shoes. She wears a magic wishing coat woven by her mother from green moss and gold thread.

She goes into service in a great house where the lord and lady take a great liking to her but the kitchen staff treat her cruelly, beating her, and giving her dirty pots to wash and the ashes to clear. When the lord and lady give a great feast lasting three days and nights in their son's honour, all the cooks go to see the first night's dancing, but Mossycoat has to stay in the kitchen. On the second night she is determined to go to the ball, and puts all the cooks to sleep with a touch of her magic coat, then she washes and changes into her gold dress and white slippers (though she keeps on her wishing coat) and goes to the ball. The young lord is enchanted and dances with her. As soon as the dance ends she wishes herself back into the kitchen, changes back into her greasy clothes and wakes the cooks. On the third night Mossycoat again puts a spell on the cooks, dresses in the coloured dress and white slippers, and dances with the young lord. When she wishes herself away one of the white slippers is left behind, and the lovesick prince sets out to find the girl whose foot fits the tiny shoe. After everyone else has tried the shoe, Mossycoat is allowed to try it, reveals herself in her beautiful dresses, and they live happily ever after.

references to the site. Prepare a cartoon strip of the story (using matchstick figures), and ask them to jot down words describing the location of each main event as an aide memoir when they retell the story. Key Stage 1 pupils could use the Mossycoat story if you are on a domestic site. Enlarge the cartoon opposite and ask them to fill in the background on the visit. Written work using the pictures can be done later in class

■ finding pictures of mythical or Biblical stories which pupils already know, like the story of Hercules. As a class exercise, retell the story, using the image to supply descriptions of people and events

■ finding an interesting picture or sculpture and making up a personal history for it. Pupils should interweave the story with a description of the site. For example, use images like the three figures shown here, or the carving of Tiranius (see Contents page), both from Hadrian's Wall . Who are they? How are they dressed and what are their personalities? Why have they travelled here - to give a message or warning, to fulfil a promise, to seek out something or somebody? What was this place like then? What happened to them? Why were their images left here?

■ discussing the difference between story and history

■ thinking up their own story about an occupant of the site, like a parlour maid, soldier, monk or owner. This exercise is useful in thinking about the difference between questions which can be answered by observation, and those which require further research. For example, on an abbey site it may be possible for a monk to look out over a wall at the activity taking place in the town outside, but whether he would have been allowed to join in, or under what circumstances, would need to be researched back in school

■ retelling their own versions of the story of the site in pairs or small groups. This is a good way of checking what the pupils have understood about the site in a context which is not too threatening for the less confident

■ retelling a story from a different point of view: perhaps retelling an attack from the perspective of the defeated side, or the story of an aristocratic family from the point of view of a servant

■ taking part in role play exploring the functions of different parts of the site

Housesteads, Hadrian's Wall.

Hercules, Bolsover Castle, Derbyshire

■ acting out a scene from the story of the site. A simple improvisation will give pupils the chance to bring to life the information they have learnt about the site or a particular period of history, and to try out appropriate vocabulary. You may find it useful to divide pupils into groups and allot each member a character from the story of the site. Start them off by retelling some of the history, bring it to an exciting point then stop, and let them continue in role.

A good way to round off a visit and give pupils a chance to reflect on what they have seen and learnt is to ask them to privately visualise or 'have a dream' about the site and its stories. In order to do the activity, pupils need to sit down somewhere quietly, each in their own space. It is useful to talk them through the visualisation, telling them:

■ to listen to the sounds of the site and to look all around them, to get a good sense of their surroundings

■ to close their eyes and to go back in time to the period when the site was not ruined or full of tourists, but bustling with its own life. You may want to specify the period on which they are to focus

■ to imagine the site as it was at that time: the sounds, smells and sensations they would have felt if they had really been there.

Allow a short period of quiet for them to build up the picture, full of colour and detail, then invite them to 'come back' at their own pace into the present day, and open their eyes and look around them once more. Invite pupils to share something from their 'dream' with the class or a small group.

DRAMA

Drama at an historic site can be a good introduction for teachers who are wary of trying drama. It can be included as part of the special events of the visit and can be touched on for short periods, going in and out of the activities so that sustained exploration of the medium is not necessarily required.

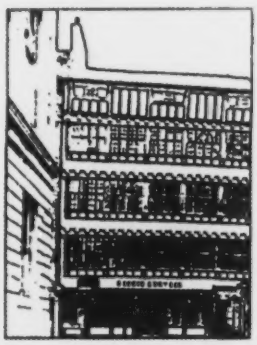
HOT SEATING

Aim of exercise: to give facts about a site, person or a period.

Starting point: choose and research a character, historical or imaginary. Pupils need to have a reason for asking the questions, for example, they have been asked to retell the person's story.

Method: a signal which shows you have gone into role, or come out of it, needs to be agreed, like snapping your fingers. Introduce yourself in role - you do not have to adopt a different voice - this is not about acting, but about 'making characters present' so that pupils can talk to them. If you cannot answer a question just come out of role and explain that you do not know.

Example: at Bessie Surtees House in Newcastle, the teacher was hot-seated as Bessie, who eloped through one of the windows. Pupils were writing Bessie's diary.



Bessie Surtees House, Newcastle upon Tyne.

Dido Belle

TEACHER IN ROLE

Aim of exercise: teacher and pupils working together to explore a situation, such as what attitudes, fears or concerns were held by characters who lived at the site.

Starting point: research the period and characters. Agree a signal for coming out of role.

Method: give pupils a situation or characters and ask them to improvise. When they have settled into their roles take on your role.

Development: you can vary the role you choose according to how much direction is needed by your pupils. A high-status role such as a lord can influence the direction of the drama, a low-status role such as a beggar will allow the pupils to determine the direction. A neutral role, such as a messenger, can be a very useful way of adding key ingredients to the drama but still leaving decisions about action to the pupils.

Example: a teacher in role as Dido Belle at Kenwood House explored with pupils the attitudes of household members and visitors to Kenwood House towards this young mixed-race woman, who was treated sometimes as a servant and sometimes as family.

Henrietta Howard

ROLE ON THE WALL

Aim of exercise: to create a distancing, reflective way of building a deep understanding of a role.

Starting point: a role can be represented by a portrait or bust which all pupils can easily see.

Method: pupils study the portrait and each contributes a short phrase describing the person. Note the descriptions and read back so that everyone can share ideas. Some may be contradictory: this does not matter - different people see different aspects.

Development: improvisations of real or possible events are carried out, with different pupils (or the teacher) taking on the role so that it becomes a collective representation rather than an individual interpretation.

Example: at Marble Hill House, a portrait of Henrietta Howard, for whom the house was built, was used by Y6 pupils learning about her life. Pupils later took turns to imitate her pose in front of the portrait and spoke aloud the Countess' thoughts about her new home at Marble Hill.

Chiswick House

FREEZE-FRAME

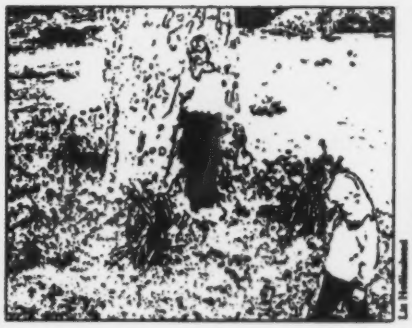
Aim of exercise: to provide a controlled situation for empathy, part acting and part discussion.

Starting point: a freeze-frame is a tableau or frozen moment. It can be described as being like pressing the pause button on a video, which freezes the action.

Method: groups of pupils work together on preparing a freeze frame to represent a moment from the life story of a character or the history of a site. Freeze-frames are arranged in chronological order and shown in turn, or groups can improvise scenes and be ready to 'freeze' on an agreed signal from the teacher. Another method of creating the freeze-frames involves individuals acting as 'sculptors' to their groups, moving them physically or with spoken instructions into a freeze-frame to represent a specific moment.

Development: the freeze-frames can be 'brought to life' on a signal and then frozen again, giving the opportunity for development. Or ask the group to show what was happening an hour/ a day/ a week before or after their scene.

Example: Y9 pupils at Chiswick House London, explored the lives of those who lived there.



THOUGHT TRACKING

Aim of exercise: to share the thoughts of pupils engaged in a freeze-frame.

Starting point: thought tracking can take place when the group are viewing a freeze-frame, or at a still moment in a group drama improvisation. One person is invited to speak at a time.

Method: the teacher can start by using a simple strategy such as the instruction that when called by name, pupils should speak aloud what they in their character roles are thinking at that moment. The teacher can also ask follow-up questions, to elicit more information, or phrase specific questions to raise issues with individuals or the group.

Development: when pupils are engaged in dramatic play, thought tracking can be used to stop them and help them to go more deeply into the causes and consequences of action.

Example: Y2 pupils at Boscobel House in Shrophire, where Prince Charles (later Charles II) hid in an oak tree to escape from Cromwell's soldiers who were hunting him, acted out the story. They were stopped at crucial moments to share their thoughts. The words were recorded, and were used later to retell the story from the point of view of the Prince, a soldier, and the people who lived there.

CONSCIENCE ALLEY

Aim of exercise: to allow the group to consider the complexity of a difficult choice facing a character who lived at the site.

Starting point: start a discussion of a moment when a turning point had to be faced by the character and explain that you are all going to help with the decision.

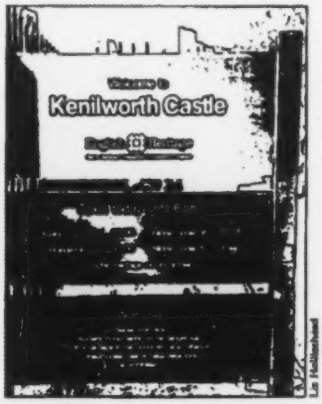
Method: the group makes two lines facing each other, forming an alley down which one pupil, in role as a key character, has to pass. Each side takes a different point of view on the dilemma, and each pupil whispers advice to the character as s/he walks through the alley. The character decides what advice to follow.

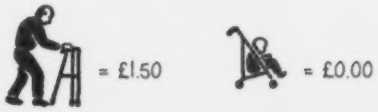
Development: the consequences of the decision are acted out, and then compared with a real historical account. In discussion, it can also be valuable if the character explains which contribution was the deciding factor.

Example: Charles I was imprisoned for over a year at Carisbrooke Castle before his eventual trial and execution. He made two unsuccessful escape attempts. Y7 pupils formed a conscience alley to weigh up the pros and cons of trying to escape, with all the potential consequences.

READING

Pupils do not have to be good readers to investigate physical evidence. Once their interest has been hooked, though, you can use their need to have questions answered as a reason for reading to find the information.





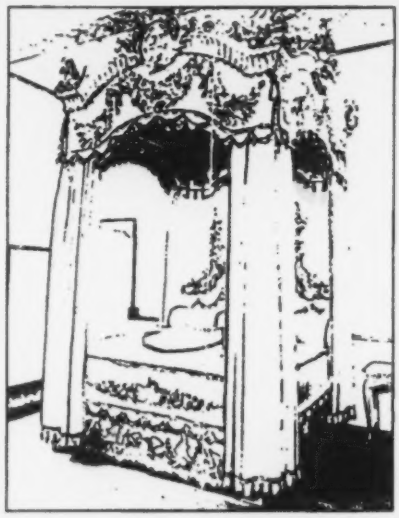
READING-FREE ZONE

New or poor readers will welcome an exercise in which the object is to ban as much writing from the place as possible. Give them the task of replacing all the written signs by pictograms in order to help foreign tourists to understand the place or get around it safely. This exercise involves reading the notices, and also copying them down, in order to enter them in pupils' own booklets of useful pictograms, which could perhaps later be presented to the site owners. Later, in the classroom, pupils can each write introductions for their booklets, circulate them for reading and comments by the rest of the class, then re-write them accordingly.

RELUCTANT READERS

Working in a different environment can encourage reluctant readers because they want to find out more, and will need to use reference books to do so. They will need a well-defined aim to spur them on, such as producing:

■ a fascinating facts guidebook. Individuals or pairs will be responsible for one page each, and they need to find out one interesting thing about an area and illustrate it with a picture (own drawing, photograph or photocopy). You may need to prime pupils with an assortment of ideas, but they must follow this up by finding out the facts from the guidebook or reference books brought to the site.



This bed cost £50.
A house maid was paid £5 a year.

■ a book of favourite objects. Ask pupils to choose the object they would most like to own, and ask them to draw it, labelling the materials from which it is made. Back in school research can be undertaken into where the material/s came from.

100 years ago things in our street would have looked different

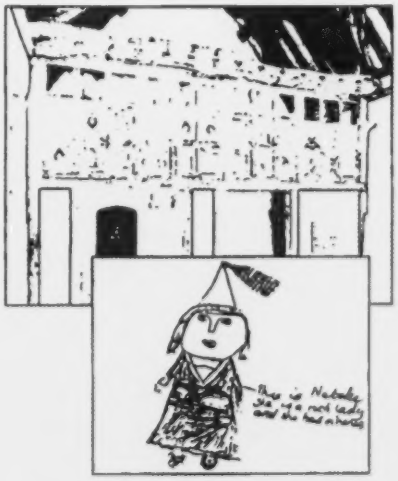
post box was not much different

horse trough and water

lights ran off gas

■ interpretation panels. If you are visiting a ruin or unfurnished place, you could decide to provide illustrated panels on what the place might have looked like when lived in. (There may already be artist's impressions of the site to give them inspiration.) Pupils can make sketches of individual areas on site to add, after reading and research, the appropriate furniture, wall and floor coverings. The local high street could undergo similar treatment, with illustrated panels, with research into street lighting, and shops and shopping.

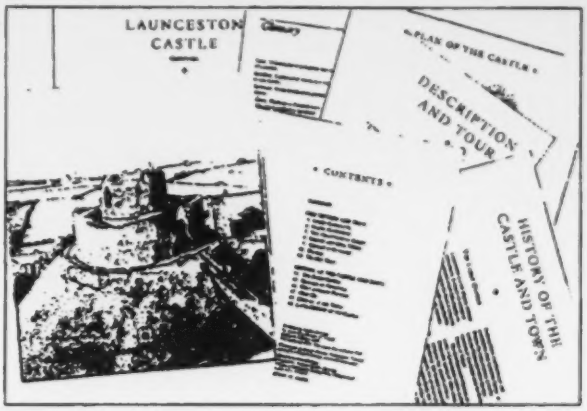
■ a guide to costume. Different areas of the site or locality would have been frequented by different levels of society or people doing different jobs. Pupils can research how they dressed, and either create their own guide to costumes, accompanied by pictures of the site, or make panels or figures to stand in situ, which they feel would add to visitors' understanding of the place.



Fiddleford Manor, Dorset.

USING THE GUIDEBOOK

Use the guide book as an example of a non-fiction text to look at the layout, and talk about the function of contents pages, sections,



headings and sub headings, emboldened words, captions, bibliographies and glossaries.
It is useful to read together, or for good readers to read for themselves, carefully selected parts of the guide book before a visit. Underline and look up words which are new, either in a dictionary or in the glossary if there is one.

The meanings of architectural words can be reinforced on site by asking for labelled drawings of appropriate features which can be used in a class display.

The language of guidebooks introduces pupils to text directed to a specific audience. Use two or all three of the extracts below (according to the age of your pupils) to look at vocabulary, and sentence structure and length.

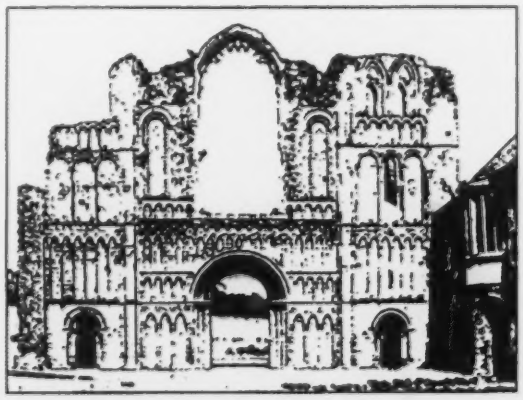
Castle Acre Priory Church

Which description is for:

■ a knowledgeable person interested in history and buildings?

■ an ordinary visitor?

■ a seven-year old?



West Front, Castle Acre Priory, Norfolk.

1) The church is very old. One side has a doorway and wall with lots of patterns. A big window was made later. It cut into the patterns.

2) The west front is a very fine example of twelfth-century architecture. The principal doorway is of four orders with elaborate mouldings, and is set in a triple series of wall arcades, separated by ornamental string courses. The three further tiers of arcading above the door were partly destroyed in the fifteenth century when a large window was inserted.

3) The west front was built in the twelfth century. Its main doorway has four lines of carvings around it. The rest of the wall is divided into six layers of arch patterns. The bottom three are separated by decorated lines, and the top ones are broken up by a window which was added three hundred years later.

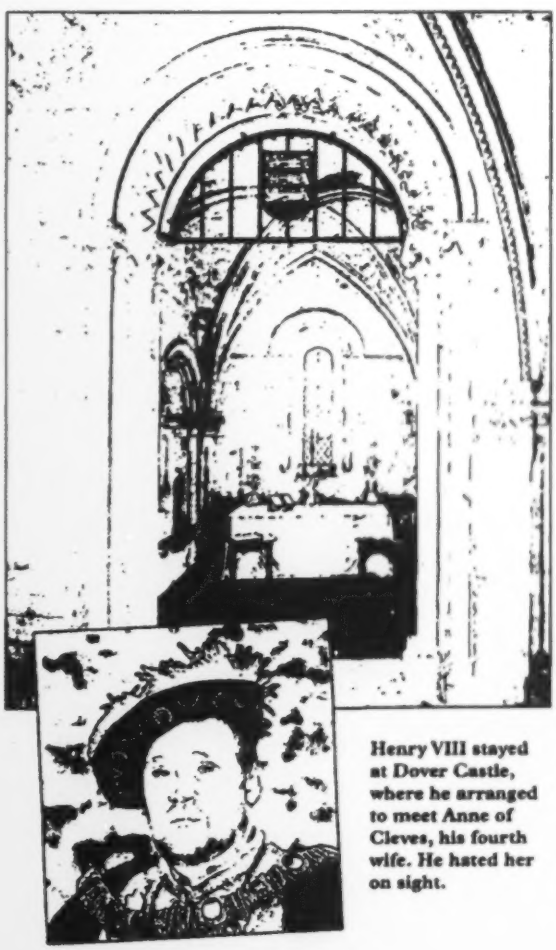
Now look at your own site's guidebook, and re-write a paragraph for a young audience as a class or as an individual exercise. On site, if there are information panels, send pupils off in pairs or with an adult helper to read them and then re-write them for seven-year old visitors.

Guidebooks give the history of the site, and may include references to famous people, or to parts of the site where notable things happened. It is useful to read these extracts together before a visit, so that, once on site, pupils can try to identify which rooms the famous person may have used or where the specifically mentioned places are. There is some magic attached to standing on the same spot as a long dead romantic figure, which you may want to use in drama work or which pupils may want to keep as a moment all to themselves.

Key Stage 1 pupils will be unable to read interpretation panels but they do present them with the opportunity of seeing a word, and then identifying the object or condition to which it refers. This can sometimes be turned into a quest, like looking for a crest, or a particular decorative device such as an animal, pattern or flower.

LOOKING AT DOCUMENTS

Documents can alert pupils to the fact that language changes, and that authors of supposedly factual reports are not always unbiased. Importantly they give a point of contact with a person from the past, a flavour of the times, which can be a spur to imagining what it might have been like then. Look for extracts in the guidebook, or ask at your local history studies library. Documents may be in Latin or French, or an earlier version of English. It is interesting for pupils to see what the originals looked like: your local studies librarian may be able to help, even if it is only with a copy of a contemporary document, so that at least pupils can see how different it is. For class work you will need a modern transcription with photocopies for each pupil. Read it in class and ask pupils to:



Henry VIII stayed at Dover Castle, where he arranged to meet Anne of Cleves, his fourth wife. He hated her on sight.

- highlight all the words they have never come across before, then make a list of those that refer to features peculiar to that place or period, general words that are no longer in use, and old-fashioned versions of modern words
- bracket words which they recognise but which are spelt differently (a modern transcription may have also updated the spelling)
- ring words which they recognise, but which are used in a different way
- underline unfamiliar phrases or places where the sentence structure is strange
- decide if the author approves or disapproves of the people or events being written about, and put a box around words or phrases which seem to support this. (This may not always apply.)

As a class compare the words and sentence structure with their modern equivalents, and ask pupils to rewrite the passage in modern English. If you have identified any bias, include this in the modern version, or, if you teach Key Stage 4 pupils, ask them to write it from an opposite bias.

On site find the location referred to in your document, and ask pupils to list what they think is different now, and then ask for descriptive words for now and then, using the I see, I hear, I feel exercise described on page 7. If their document has described a scene like the one opposite, ask them to use the words they have collected to write an account as if they were an onlooker. If your document is a straight description, use the framework of writing as a visitor who has a sudden flashback, and sees the place as it once was.

Queen Elizabeth's entry to Kenilworth Castle, Saturday, 9 July, 1575.

...it was eight o'clock in the evening ere her Highness came to Killingworth; where in the park, about a flight-shoot from the Brays and the first gate of the castle, one of ten Sybils...comely clad in a pall of white silk, pronounced a proper poesy in English rhyme and metre... This her Majesty benignly accepting, passed forth unto the next gate of the Brays, which for its length, largeness and use...they call now the tiltyard, where a porter, tall of person, big of limb and stern of countenance, wrapped also in silk had a rough speech full of passions...proclaims open the gates and free passage to all...

Extract from Letter Describing the Magnificent Pageants Presented before Queen Elizabeth at Kenilworth Castle in 1675 by Robert Laneham.

Words referring to things from that place or time
Killingworth - Kenilworth
Brays - part of outer defence system
tiltyard - long narrow ground for knights, armed with lances, to gallop at and to try to unseat each other

Words or phrases no longer in common use
flight-shoot - arrow's length
Sybils - prophetesses

Old fashioned versions of modern words
pall - covering
poesy - poetry
passed forth - went out
comely - becoming, pretty
clad - dressed or covered with
largeness - large size
passage - entrance
proclaims - declares
ere - before

Words used in different way
pronounced - recited
proper - good
porter - doorkeeper
wrapped - dressed in
rough - simple

Distorted sentences
This her Majesty benignly accepted - we would normally put *This* at the end of the sentence
comely clad in a pall of white silk - dressed attractively in white silk
which for its length, largeness and use - because of its size and use
tall of person, big of limb and stern of countenance - tall, well-built and serious,
rough speech full of passions - simple but passionate speech

Bias
The Queen is referred to by the titles *her highness* or *her majesty*, and the author reports that she *benignly* received the welcoming speech. This indicates awe and admiration on the writer's part: a less respectful writer would have referred to her just as the Queen and would probably have noted that she listened and moved on.

Artist's impression of Elizabeth's arrival at Kenilworth Castle, Warwickshire.

Kenilworth Castle today.

NON FICTION WRITING

Writing is the most usual form of recording information on a visit. Key Stage 1 pupils may need an adult helper to record their notes.

LABELS

Drawing is another way of recording information on a visit: adding labels is the next step in making it a better record.
Labels can be one word to describe:

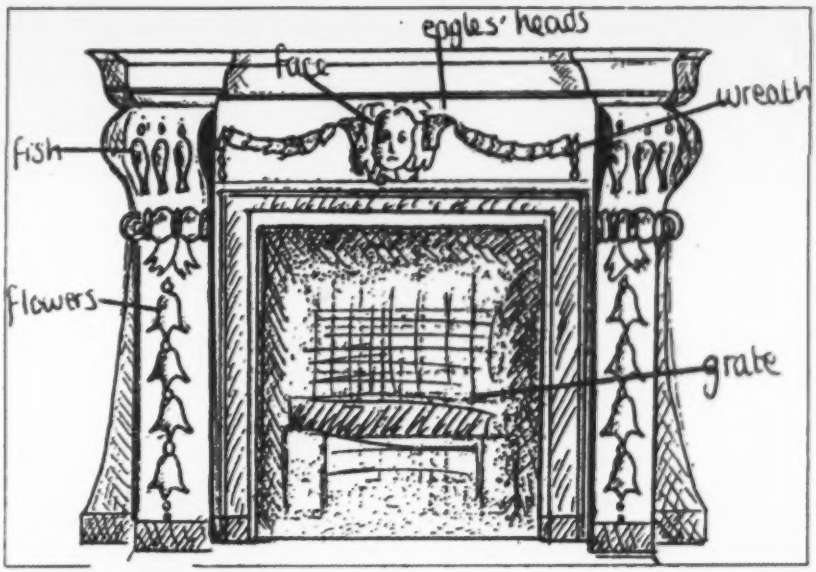
- size
- colours
- textures
- materials
- shape
- function.

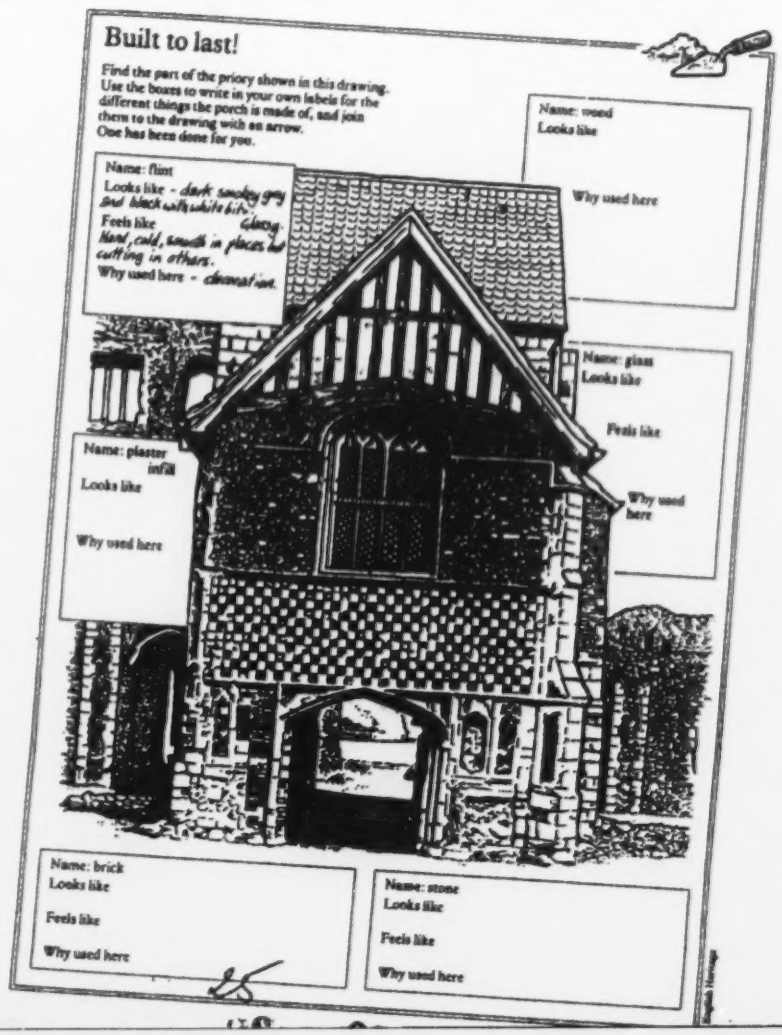
Simple labels are a good way of getting reluctant writers started.

Older pupils can add fuller labels, perhaps explaining how something works, or what additions and alterations have been made, and how they deduce this. These still have the advantage for poor writers of being in note form, not fully constructed sentences. You might want to make things even simpler by providing an activity sheet for pupils to fill in. You can use the labels later on in class for sentence structure work.

CLOZE WORK

First of all, as a piece of class work, read extracts from the guidebook or a story. The class can note new words, so that they are familiar with them before going on site. When preparing your activity sheets of sentences for pupils to complete, include a list of the new words (more words than they need).




Built to last!
Find the part of the priory shown in this drawing. Use the boxes to write in your own labels for the different things the porch is made of, and join them to the drawing with an arrow. One has been done for you.
Name: flint
Looks like - dark smoky grey and black with white bits
Feels like - gritty, hard, cold, smooth in places but cutting in others.
Why used here - decorative.
Name: wood
Looks like
Why used here
Name: glass
Looks like
Feels like
Why used here
Name: plaster infill
Looks like
Why used here
Name: brick
Looks like
Feels like
Why used here
Name: stone
Looks like
Feels like
Why used here

gargoyles arch-shaped shelf heavy pillars audience
dark square thick tower stained glass hall
pulpit spire wood
silent roof lectern nave altar

The highest part is called the.....

There are strange stone faces on the outside.
They are called.....

The windows are ..... at the top.

The door is .....and is made of.....

Inside it is ..... and .....

The pews for sitting on face the ..... where the vicar takes the service.

There is a ..... for holding the Bible.

The part where people sit in the centre is called the .....

There are tall ..... holding up the ceiling.

CLEAR DESCRIPTIONS

These can be encouraged by practising with the "What am I?" game. This is a guessing game in which each pupil secretly chooses a feature or part of the site and then writes a detailed description of it on a card. The written clues are exchanged and pupils go around the site using the clues and their own observational skills to try to identify the object or feature.

INSTRUCTIONS

Unambiguous instructions are very hard to write. Style takes second place to clarity, short sentences rule (using imperatives), and precision comes into its own. Instructions are easier to follow if all the unnecessary words are removed, and if each new step is numbered. Introduce pupils to instructions by giving them the steps needed for some simple activity, like playing snap or loading a walkman, but in a jumbled order, and ask them to sequence them correctly.

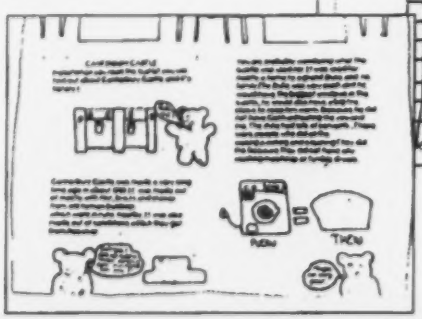
On site, ask pairs of pupils to write directions for routes around the place, which they can test out on another pair, and then make the necessary adjustments. You may first need to look at some mathematical vocabulary with pupils, like straight line, diagonal, semi-circle, turning a right angle (or obtuse or acute). They will need to:

- state the starting point
- include measurements of distance to be travelled (paces will do)
- record and describe every change of direction
- keep to acceptable routes, and if using ruined buildings, use doorways not short cuts through ruined walls
- avoid potential safety hazards.

Later, this could be used as part of a trail, with labelled pictures and short descriptions forming the rest.

WRITE YOUR OWN GUIDEBOOK

Writing their own guidebook to the site or locality will concentrate your pupils' minds both on content and on style. It is best to decide on a projected audience of children younger than themselves, which will involve consideration of appropriate vocabulary, concept and length. They can work in pairs, each pair contributing a page. On site allocate areas to



Guidebooks designed for young children

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write about, then ask pupils to:

- jot down descriptive words
- find out what the area was used for, appealing to you for more information if necessary
- decide on three things that a younger person would find interesting about it
- give a word limit.

A cartoon or child-friendly figure could be used throughout, to increase the appeal to a young child. A similar exercise is to re-write the information panels at the site for younger people, or if you are looking at your local high street, the class can design and write its own.

ACCOUNTS OF THE DAY

This is a good way of encouraging pupils to review the day, and summarise its main events. Before beginning to write, talk to your pupils about selecting, prioritising and summarising the information to be included. What is the important information? An account is written in the past tense and should include:

- an introduction, saying who went where and when, and for what purpose
- a description of what happened, in chronological order
- a summing up - what was achieved, was it useful or enjoyable?

A writing frame can be useful to indicate both content and expected length. Older pupils can use it as a preliminary draft before writing a more polished final version, or as a preparatory stage in writing a report.

Writing frame (Key Stage 2) for an account of the visit.

Our visit to Pendennis Castle

On .....day,..class .....
went to .....

We are doing a project on.....
and we went find out more information about
.....

When we got there we.....
We learned that.....

After that we.....
We found out that.....

I think the best part was.....
because.....

Pendennis Castle, Cornwall.

REPORT WRITING

Reports are factual and non-personal; they explore a subject or theme and they may include recommendations. They can be placed in the context of role play or be a straightforward investigation and review of the facts. A report is generally written in the present tense and includes:

- an introduction stating what the subject of the report is, and very briefly what the report is setting out to do
- a section or paragraph for each aspect being examined. This may include a description of the present situation
- a summing up, which may include a recommendation.

A note collecting frame will help pupils to collect their information, which they can use later to write their reports, using a writing frame if necessary.

Collecting information for a report (Key Stage 3)
Ways of helping visitors to understand Down House

What is Down House?
Where is it?

List the devices used to help visitors understand it. (Possible devices: guidebook, audio tape or wand, video, interpretation panels, guided tour, exhibition, museum, guides in each room, custodians.)

First device?
Advantages?
Disadvantages?
Recommendations?

Second device?
Advantages?
Disadvantages?
Recommendations?

Summing up. Are the devices successful?
Would you recommend any changes?

Collecting information for a report (Key Stage 2)

You are a spy for Lord Ferrars who is planning to attack Peveril castle.

Before you enter, look at how the castle fits into its surroundings.
Is it easy to attack?.....
Why/why not?.....

Is there anywhere where an army might get close?.....
.....

Inspect the enclosing walls.
Would it be easy to climb over the walls unseen?
Why/why not?.....
.....

Find the main entrance. What obstacles would you need to overcome to get in?.....
.....

Which is the weakest part of the wall?.....
.....
.....

Find the keep.
Tick any of the following you can see or think
- were once there
- battlements
- turrets
- strong door
- outside steps
- drawbridge
- moat or ditch
- arrow slits
- forebuilding
- tall building
- built on a mound
- entrance raised above ground level
- no windows on the ground floor

Do you think it would be best for an army to enter the castle by force, or for one person to trick his or her way in, then open the gates?

Report to my Lord Ferrars

In this secret document, I, Sandra Bell, secret agent seek out the defences of Peveril Castle.

Firstly, the surrounding area.
The castle is on a steep hill
which makes it hard to attack.

It is best to approach from the East

PERSUASIVE TECHNIQUES

Pupils will have already been exposed to persuasive language, mostly through advertisements. Looking at a site or locality as a product to be 'sold' can be a useful way of encouraging pupils to find the facts, before they start to look at how these facts can be manipulated by skilful use of language. There are three elements to plan for in persuasive writing:

- the target audience
- the message
- persuasive techniques.

Start off by bringing in estate agents' brochures. These show clearly how, whilst apparently giving straight facts, like measurements, descriptive words are chosen to give the best possible picture. Make a list of the adjectives, and talk about what they might actually be describing, and why those particular words are used. For example, spacious implies uncluttered space, cosy suggests warmth, comfort, and a lived-in feel. Are there any other adjectives that will give a good impression, like pretty, charming, useful, convenient? Superlatives are often used, so this is a good opportunity to talk about comparatives and superlatives, and how they are formed.

On site combine history, maths and English by putting pupils into the role of period estate agents, but using modern language. Use the check-list to make sure that all the information is collected to write up the details in proper sentences later. Remember that pupils will need to decide what are the bad points as well as the good, in order to avoid mentioning them or, by use of language, turn them into attractive features. For example, the height of rooms in old cottages is often low, but can be described as charming, traditional, old-world, intimate or cosy.

Brodsworth Hall, South Yorkshire

Estate Agent's Check List

Name of property: Brodsworth Hall

Function of room: entrance and inner hall

Floor measurements: 19x10 metres at longest points

Height: mostly one storey, but up to three storeys (height of house) where the stairs are.

Windows: big skylight in roof over stairs, and two large windows facing each other near door end. Door has glass in it.

Good points: rich dark reds and ochres in carpet and on walls. White marble statues. Elegant staircase which winds round on itself. Feeling of airiness over staircase. Wide front entrance with double doors.

Bad points: the dark colours are a bit oppressive in middle section where there is no natural light. Looks cluttered with all the statues, a big heavy table and other furniture scattered about. Lots of doors and a corridor leading off to main rooms make it draughty. Coloured fake marble pillars divide up space. White marble statues gleam in dark, giving eerie ghostly feel.

Estate Agent's description
Name of property: *Brodsworth Hall*

Target audience: *very rich, snobbish person,*

Message: *this house is fashionable Victorian, in expensive style*

The hall is ideally proportioned, being just one storey high on immediate entry through the impressive double doors. It gives an intimate, warm and welcoming feel, but rises to grandeur where the stairwell leads up to the top the house, bathed in dazzling light from an enormous skylight. The hall conveniently gives easy access to the principal rooms, and is decorated in the latest fashion with highest quality carpeting, and a delightful marble-effect decoration on the walls. This stylish Italianate design is carried over onto imposing pillars which give a feeling of solidity and strength. The hall beautifully sets off a valuable collection of exquisite marble statues, reflecting a trend in collecting tasteful and priceless artworks seen in the very best country houses.

ADVERTISEMENTS

Estate agents do not generally need to attract their clients before trying to sell them houses (instead house-hunters seek them out) but most other advertisements need to attract the customer before trying to sell the product. Also, space is generally limited and the message in most advertisements needs to be put across simply, so sentences are usually short. Also a strong clear image is important, both to catch attention, and to back up the message.

If you are teaching Yr 6 or above, bring a range of advertisements into class and decide who the target audience is, and what the message is. Then look to see what techniques have been used:

■ address. How is the reader addressed: is it directly personal, with the word "you" used or implied? For example "How often have you said never again!" Is a shared experience suggested, with the use of "we". For example "How often have we said never again!". Or is it impersonal "99% of people say..." Is the feeling one of sharing information between friends, or of an expert giving advice?

■ sentence structure. Short sentences, particularly exclamations, give a feeling of urgency. Sometimes these are used just at the beginning to grab attention. Questions give a feeling of intimacy between writer and audience.

■ language level. Do the types or lengths of words used indicate a particular target audience, like pre-school children, people who do not read much, teachers?

■ emotive language. Are words with particular associations used? For example "sun-drenched golden beach" is actually the same as "sunny beach" but suggests that the sun is constant and all enveloping like water, and that the sand is warm, gleaming, dazzling, and the reader will somehow share in its goldenness

■ how often is the product's name repeated?

■ jargon. Is language used to impress, like technical or scientific words, or does it show that the target audience belongs to the same interest or age group?

■ is there a catchy slogan or device?

■ is there an accompanying image? What effect does it have? Would a different image give a different meaning?

■ is there a humorous twist?

■ is there a special selling point, like a reduction if you buy now, a special offer (three for the price of two), a free gift?

Sites are a good stimuli for adverts, not least because pupils can cheat if they decide to use humour in their presentations. There are immediate laughs if pupils choose to target a period audience, but use modern language or images, as long as they recognise what they are doing.

Ask pupils to choose an object on site for which to write an advertisement. They can opt for a written advert, or a spoken one, but request that:

■ a written advert is short and snappy, easy to read, and has one good forceful image

■ a spoken advert has a time limit and has several images (give guidelines on both).

Give them this checklist to collect notes on site:

■ product:

■ good points

■ bad points

■ target audience

■ message: is it new/improved/better than others or what was used before? Why?

■ language: (level, jargon, technical)

■ description (factual and emotive words)

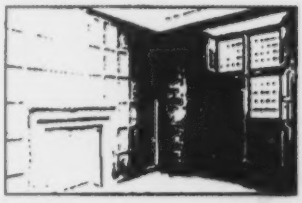
PERSUASIVE TECHNIQUES

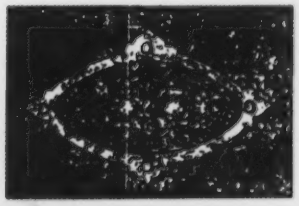
- approach (use you, we or impersonal)
- accompanying image
- secret weapon (humour, slogan, special offer).

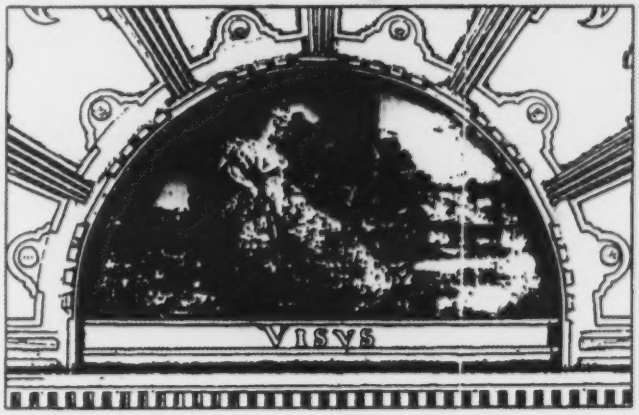
It is worthwhile spending time on the image, a good sketch or photograph will play a major role in making the advert eye-catching.

Spoken commentary to a television advertisement (30 seconds)

In a soft, confidential female voice, with the background music of Pachebel's Canon played very softly.







Are you embarrassed when friends pop in for a banquet? Do those musty wall hangings let you down? Now is the time to change! Join the growing numbers of the country's most elegant style-setters who have installed Bolsover Wooden Panelling. Try our plain classic deluxe finish, always warm and welcoming, ideal for family or the steward's quarters. Or for that smart up-to- the minute look for your public rooms, what about Bolsover's painted range? Choose from a rainbow of sparkling colours, or have your own designs added by our highly skilled artists. And for those special times, like a royal visit, you can do no better than Bolsover's hand finished range of raised motifs, picked out in dazzling gold.
Why hesitate? You know you deserve it. Apply now to Bolsover's Wooden Panelling, Derbyshire.

Written Advertisement

Cut those household bills!

Install draught-reducing, easy-to-clean ***William's Wooden Wall Panels*** and you can halve your expensive log and servant bills. ***William's Wooden Wall Panels*** are simple to assemble and come with their own with concealed self-tightening, intercommunicating long-grained spindles. There is a whole range of ***William's Wooden Wall Panels*** to suit all tastes and money chests.

Apply now to **William's House of Wood**, Windswept Heath (formerly Bolsover Forest), Bolsover Derbyshire. Replies by return pigeon. For the next ten days only orders over 15 guineas will get a **20% discount!**

Please send me details today!
Name
Address

CREATIVE WRITING

It is best to approach creative work on site in stages, the first of which is thinking about words not just as carriers of meaning, but as agents for creating rhythm, pace and emotional response based on their sounds.

LOOKING AT WORDS

Words are made up of syllables. To encourage pupils to look closely at words, ask them to draw an outline of the building they are visiting, then fit words which describe it within the outline. The words should be selected carefully for their syllable length, so that the short words describe narrow sections of the facade, and multi-syllabled ones occupy broader stretches.

As a follow-on, use some of the words in a haiku. This is a Japanese poetic form of three lines, comprising a total of 17 syllables, in the pattern of 5,7, 5.

Words can be used deliberately to set a pace: short words of one syllable (or words made of syllables which carry equal stress) and ending in a hard sound can give speed and energy to a line. For example:

The queue shot forward as the gates sprang open to let in the eager crowd.

Words which contain long vowel sounds or are multi-syllabic can slow down and draw out line:

'On either side the river lie
Long fields of barley and of rye
or
The heavy, creaking doors edged and shuffled outwards, inch by slow inch, to draw in the quietly murmuring customers.

Repetition intensifies an effect, and a technique often used to slow down the pace is to create adjectives by adding - 'ing'.

Another layer of meaning or atmosphere can be added by the deliberate choice of emotive words, and onomatopoeic words give an immediacy, a feeling of actually being back in the place or situation described.

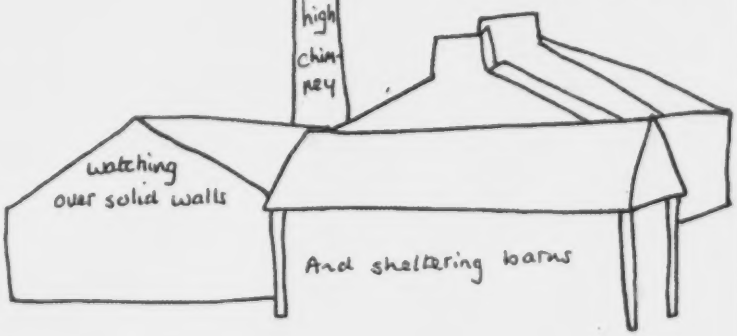
As a first step to producing a complete piece of work of their own on site, focus on one area and ask pupils to:

- each supply one line of description on a strip of paper
- sort the strips into piles: strips giving a welcoming picture of the place in one pile, ones giving a gloomy picture into another, or ones that give a feel of movement or of sound into another and so on
- in groups put each pile of strips into the best reading order
- talk about the images each give, and which are most memorable and why: this is often related to colour or movement, and provides a good introduction to thinking about deliberate imagery, and the use of metaphors or similes.

Stott Park Haiku

Tall, proud, high chimney
Watching over solid walls
And delicate sheds.

Stott Park Bobbin Mill, Cumbria.



a simile
is when something is compared to another thing. For example, the castle at night looms over the town like the hunched back of a cat about to pounce on its prey.

a metaphor
is when something is likened to something else by being called that thing. For example, the castle is a cat looming over the town, waiting to pounce on its prey.

peaceful still and sunlit

the shadow of leaves rippling its surface

far away the murmur of the river and the drone of cars

smooth but with hard jagged edges

birds singing and cooing

staring blind windows

open doorways drawing you in

hard empty circle pressing down

hard, gritty, giving nothing

long still finger pointing to the sky

sad, lonely doors leading nowhere

clear blue sky, warm golden stones

shadows growing, eating it up

Ask pupils to use their favourite image or line/s from the strips, and write their own description, in short lines, or in proper sentences as prose, with the addition of one simile or metaphor.
For example:
Hard empty circle pressing down
Onto the points of tall blind windows
With an arm reaching to the sky
Like an old monk praying
For times that have gone.
or
There are lonely doors, leading nowhere, and carvings, seen by no one. Empty windows above stare out like a blind man, and the dark shadows slowly spread upwards, eating them up.

RHYTHM AND RHYME

Rhythm is a device which can establish mood, creates pace and to which there is an intuitive response, perhaps because of the reflection of natural rhythms, like our own heartbeats. It creates an expectation that it will continue, and rhyme at regular intervals reinforces this feeling of expectation, and when it is delivered, satisfaction. Rhythm is established by the pattern of words, and where the stress in each one falls.

To set up a rhythm the stress pattern is repeated. Explain this by asking pupils to repeat the following, giving each syllable the same emphasis and clapping out one regular beat for each syllable:

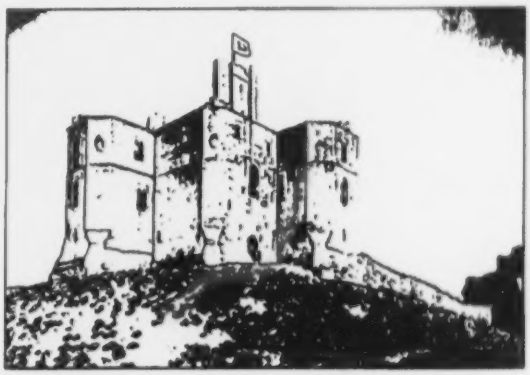
Warkworth Castle, stately, silent.

They will appreciate that it sounds silly, and not at all natural, because in ordinary speech some syllables carry more stress than others. If you ask them to say it normally, they will find that in these particular words the stress falls on the first syllable. Now ask them to repeat the line, but clapping out one beat per word (four beats a line), and stressing the first syllable each time. Do the same with the following four lines and they will hear that a rhythm has been set up by the words.

Warkworth Castle, stately, silent
Scene of **battles, long** and **violent**
Now it's **peaceful, now** it's **lonely**
No more **soldiers, tourists only.**

Once the expectation of a regular rhythm has been set up, pupils can play with it, by speaking words off the beat, or adding extra syllables in, to produce their own rap. The rhyme gives pace because it creates a feeling of expectation which is fulfilled when the rhyme is spoken. In a rap, where speed is important, it is best to have rhymes following immediately on from each other. Use the word collecting exercises on site to find emotive words or an exercise like I see, I hear, I feel, to form a bank of words to use.

Pupils can experiment with other stress patterns by collecting words around the site and thinking of a suitable adjective to pair with each, so that a group of short,



Warkworth Castle, Northumberland.

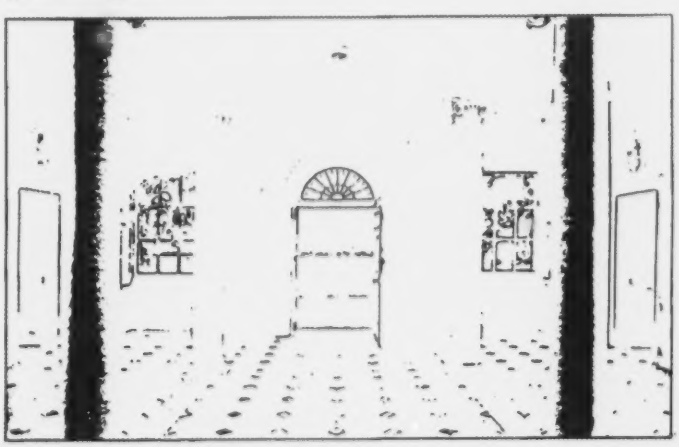
Wark	worth	**Cas**	tle,	**state**	ly,	**si**	lent
Scene	of	**bat**	tles,	**long**	and	**vio**	lent
Now	it's	**peace**	ful,	**Now**	it's	**lone**	ly
No	more	**sold**	iers,	**tour**	ists	**onl**	y
Back	in	**time**	the	**Scott**	ish	**nat**	ion
Caused	this	**place**	some		**aggra**	**va**	tion
"Huh"	cried the	**lord**	in	**con**	ster	**na**	tion
Builds	himself	**Wark**	**worth**	**forti**	fi	**ca**	tion
Wark	worth	**Cas**	tle,		**rugged**	**and**	bold
Ru	ined	**majes**	tic		sad	and	cold,
Stair	ways,	**arch**	es,	**tur**	rets	**stand**	tall,
All	hemmed	**in**	by	an	**enclos**	**ing**	wall
Wark	worth	**Cas**	tle,	**tow**	ers	**of**	stone
Home	of	**con**	flict,	**bloooo**	**ooood**	and	bone,
Walk	ways	**where**	men	**looked**	for	**dan**	gers
Now	wel	**come**	in	**history**	**hungry**	stran	gers.
Yes,	**history**	**hungry**	strangers	**get**	no	**has**	sle,
When	they	**wwwalk**	into	**Wwwark**	**wwworth**	**Cas**	tle.

rhythmic epithets is created. At an historic house pupils might invent a group of epithets each made up of three syllables, for example:

stately home
splendid view
open door
polished glass

By adding simple phrases also of three syllables this list can be converted to a rhythmic poem:

I saw a/ stately home
Peeped round an/ open door
And such a/ splendid view
I saw through/ polished glass.



Marble Hill House, London.

ALLITERATION

Alliteration is also a useful technique in creative writing. It uses repetition of a sound, usually at the beginning of words, to give a good flow to the line. It was a staple part of much Middle English verse, with lines like:

Gawain gazed at the good man
who had greeted him kindly.
or:
The king lay at Camelot at
Christmas-tide.

To practise alliterative writing, ask pupils to work in pairs, each pair going to a different part of the site to collect nouns which relate to that place. For example, a pair who visit a castle kitchen might choose:

chimney, spit, fire, cauldron.

A pair at Stonehenge might select:

menhir, capstone, circle.

When the pairs have collected an agreed number of nouns they exchange their list with another pair. Now the task is to add an alliterative adjective to each noun. Remind pupils that they are trying to think of matching sounds, not identical spellings. The irregular form of so many English words means that this exercise is more easily done orally than by writing down the words, because then the ear can be tuned to the initial sound of the word. Using the examples above, pupils might come up with:

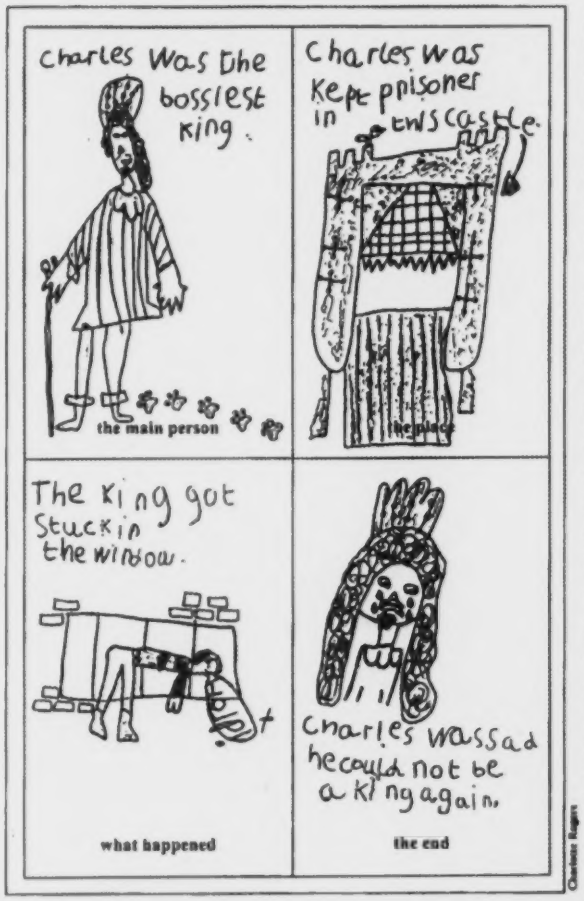
choking chimney/
sizzling spit/
fierce fire/
cavernous cauldron
mighty menhir/
covering capstone/
silent circle.

Now ask them to create a line which includes these words and to add one or more words beginning with the same sound (including a verb).
For example, the poem for the castle kitchen might go like this;

The fierce fire flames in the hearth,
Smoking fat slides down from the sizzling spit,
A cavernous cauldron cools close to the fire,
The choking chimney churns out smells and smoke.

At Stonehenge this piece could be the result:

The silent circle surrounds my single soul,
Around me march the mighty menhirs,
Above me cluster the covering capstones,
Below me, far below, are broken, brittle bones.


Charles Was the bossiest King.
the main person
Charles was kept prisoner in the castle.
the place
The King got stuck in the window.
what happened
Charles was sad he could not be a King again.
the end
Charlotte Rogers

WRITING FICTION

The ideas suggested here are intended for different age ranges:

KS1: making a big picture book

KS2: completing a story

KS3 and 4: writing a diary.

MAKING A BIG PICTURE BOOK

The Literacy Hour provides the opportunity to read or talk about the history of the place you are going to visit, and in particular, about any famous person or event. This will introduce characters and life styles which pupils should research before the visit. Talk about what makes a good story; characters, setting and plot, as a preliminary to making their own story book.

Divide an A4 sheet into four equal sections, headed main person, place, what went on, how did it end? On site pupils use these to retell the story of the famous person or event by drawing a picture in each and adding a sentence, or just words (for making into sentences later) underneath. Encourage them to use the setting as much as possible in their pictures and for the words used. Back in school, pupils can discuss each other's work, and together make a longer story, each drawing a larger picture of one event and adding the relevant sentences underneath. The best can be used to mount into a big picture book for use in the Literacy Hour, which can be lent out to other classes. If you are visiting a place where there is no obvious story in its history, make up an adventure for one of the inhabitants, making sure that you tell pupils that this is fiction.

Alternatively use a fairy story, or prepare your own set of story-board pictures for pupils to complete with details from the site, (see Mossycoat, on page 14), and to which they add their own words or sentences, collected on site.

COMPLETING A STORY

The beginnings of stories can take a disproportionate amount of time and thought. Make story writing on site simpler by supplying the first few paragraphs your-

self, or reading out part of a story set in the right period. Stop at an exciting bit and ask pupils to supply the rest, but they can only do this after preliminary work on site.

On site, send pupils, in groups, to explore different parts to find out how they functioned. Each group can show the rest around their area, then when all the site has been covered, decide as a class what would be the best place or places to use in your story. Again in groups pupils can decide if parts of the building are missing, and if so, if there is any way of finding out what it may have looked like when lived in, for example by artists' impressions of the site as it was when complete, or from reference books (bring some with you). They will also need to think about what status of people might have used different areas, and what sounds and smells there might have been. To help them think about what it might have been like at the site in the past, use the I see, I hear, I feel, exercise described on page 7, and then ask them to think what the equivalent sight, noise or smell may have been in the past.

Thinking up past equivalents to modern sounds will be difficult if the site includes a way of life pupils have never come across before, like a Roman bathhouse, in which case any additional documentary or reference material describing life in the past, should be brought to the site and read aloud.

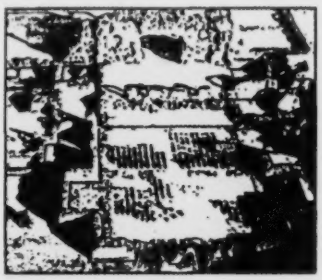
An additional hook to peg the action on is to suggest that the plot could focus on an object. Providing a good picture or better still, a replica, museum loan, or even a scroll with a message or a replica piece of clothing, will help to spark pupils' imagination.

Wroxeter Roman City: the story so far

The house was in an uproar. Julius and Severina had been shut into the dining room and told to stay there, but they could tell from listening at the door that a messenger had arrived, and whatever news he had brought had thrown the whole Marcus Corbo household into a panic.

That morning the twins had been dressed in their best clothes to await the arrival of the Emperor's very own personal private secretary. He was coming to talk to their father, a grain merchant and one of the wealthiest men in the town, to find out if Wroxeter was worthy enough, or more importantly, safe enough, to receive a visit from Emperor Hadrian himself. The secretary had a right to be worried, for although Wroxeter was one of the largest settlements in the country, it had no fort full of soldiers to protect it, even though it lay on the very edge of the Empire. From their own house, Julius and Severina could see the looming Welsh mountains, where tribes unconquered by Rome watched and waited.

Their father was still at the baths, as the secretary was not expected for another four hours, and Julius hated being cooped up in the house doing nothing. Even Severina, who at first had revelled in being allowed to wear her best red tunic and her grandmother's heavy gold brooch, was getting restless. Suddenly the door burst open and Festina, their old nursemaid, burst in. "Quick", she wheezed, " Run to the baths and give your father this scroll. There is no time to lose"...



Background noises

I live over the public baths here - you know what that means. Ugh! It's sickening. First there are the strongmen doing their exercises and swinging heavy weights about with grunts and groans. Next there are the lazy ones having a cheap massage - I can hear someone being slapped on the shoulders. Then there is the noise of a brawler or a thief being arrested and the man who always likes the sound of his own voice in the bath. And what about the ones who leap into the pool making a huge splash as they hit the water!

Letter from Seneca about the public baths in Rome.

WRITING A DIARY

Diaries can be focused on the events of daily life, or they can unfold a story as it happens. Common to both is the focus given to the person doing the writing, and it is important that some clear picture of the writer emerges. To help with creating a character, look for portraits or sculptures of figures from the period of the site, and build up a dossier of one or more figures. Ask pupils to think about:

- what status they think the character has (clothes, demeanour, related objects, background)
- what they think the person is like
- what the person is thinking
- what message is the portrait trying to give? Was it made to show the person's status, disposition (wearing armour, or romantically softly draped clothing), or character (gently playing with a dog, bird etc)? Is the sitter a family person (are there children)?
- do they like the person?

A class reference book on different aspects of the lifestyle of the chosen period is very useful in getting the details right, and when compiled, should be accessible to everyone. Ask groups or pairs to supply one page by finding out as much as they can about specific aspects. Putting the task in the form of a question gives a focus, and provides a structure for the way in which the material is presented.

On site, pupils should:

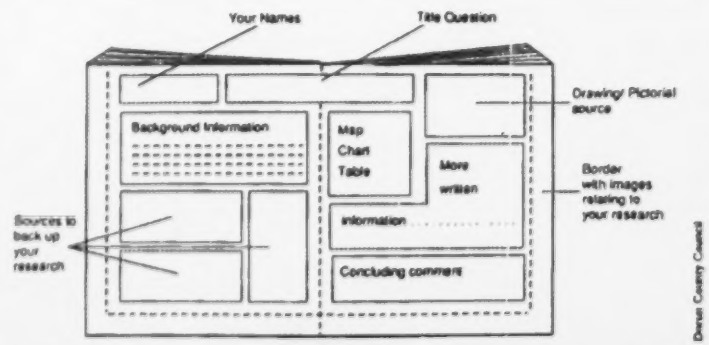
- collect words describing all the areas their character would have used
- note how warm, light or draughty the rooms they intend to feature may have been
- check any likely details they may want to use, like the view from the bedroom window, or if voices in the hall can be heard in the kitchen
- look at the routes their characters would have used to get around the place.

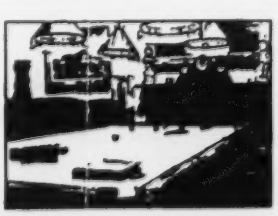
Back in school they can start on the diaries, using the class reference book to clear up uncertainty about historical details.

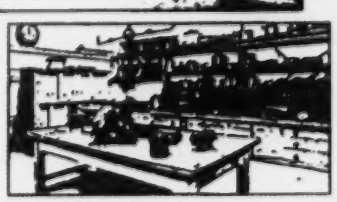
Compiling a class reference book

Questions to investigate the lifestyle at the Victorian mansion of Brodsworth Hall might include:

- what servants would there be, and what would they do?
- what were meals like?
- how did they keep the house warm and light?
- what sort of clothes were worn by the owners and their children?
- what clothes were worn by the servants?
- what happened if you were ill?
- how did people entertain themselves at home?
- what did rich women do all day?
- where did food come from and how did they cook it?







Brodsworth Hall, South Yorkshire.

INTERVIEWING

You may want to interview people for an oral history record, or to investigate the role of a local official, as part of your citizenship studies programme.

Oral history
Recording oral history involves pupils in finding out information about the past from within living memory. This can include information about your locality, or about a particular building from someone who lived or worked there, like a maid at a large house, or a factory worker. Perhaps you need information about a craft activity, or a colourful verbal picture of your own school from someone who was a pupil there a long time ago. Ask parents if they know of anybody who will have the appropriate memories, or try the history society, library or museum.

Before an interview takes place, pupils should have their questions ready. Start by:

■ leading a brainstorming session on the things pupils want to know

■ explaining about open and closed questions. Closed questions demand a yes or no, right or wrong answer. For example, "When did you work in the mill?" or " Have you got an office at the Town Hall?" is fine if you need a fact, like a date, but can leave the questioner doing most of the talking. Open-ended questions leave room for a description or opinion, and are more useful in eliciting information. For example, "What did you most like and dislike about working in the mill? Please describe your working day at the Town Hall."

■ insisting on clarity. It is best to keep questions focussed rather than general. For example asking "What did you do at school?" can lead to "Not much, bit of English" or open the floodgates to a stream of memories, pertinent and not. It is better to ask a series of more specific questions, like "How did you begin the school day? What kind of things were you taught in your English lessons? What did you play at break times?" As practice, ask your class to write down open-ended questions about something they all know about, like a book or television programme, or an event they all attended, like a sports day, and practise them on one another. When they have mastered the techniques, ask the class, or groups or pairs to write the questions they want to put, and to arrange them in a chronological or logical order, so that the interviewee is not forced to flit from topic to topic but can move smoothly from one thing to the next.

You need to decide how to record information, whether by note-taking or using a tape-recorder. You also need to decide how the interview will take place:

■ in school

■ at the person's home or work

■ with the whole class asking questions

■ with pairs or groups asking questions.

If a tape recorder is used pupils should practise how to operate it in advance, and before they start the interview they should:

■ check that the batteries are

charged, or that the flex to the socket is not likely to trip anyone

■ ensure that the tape is labelled with the person's name, date of interview, and one word description of content

■ keep the machine out of sight if possible (it can be an unnerving constant reminder to the interviewees that their words are being recorded)

■ keep the microphone as far as possible from the person being interviewed, but check that they can be heard clearly

■ check for background noise and eliminate it if possible, or move

■ get comfortable before the interview starts.

Transcribing a taped conversation is very time consuming: listening to the tape back in class, and writing down the salient points will probably be sufficient for your needs. It does give a good opportunity though to talk about the differences between spoken and written forms. If you have been recording oral history, unusual terminology for parts of buildings or craft processes, or dialect words, may have been used, and again this offers a good introduction to discussing how language changes and varies between places and generations.

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND RESOURCES

A visit to a place associated with a specific time or person from the past may encourage pupils to read historical fiction. If the school library does not have sufficient variety, try your local librarian.

Books for teachers

Amos, L, Clarke, J, and Woollard, V, *English at the Geffrye Museum: Ideas for Language Work*, Geffrye Museum Trust, 1999. Ask at your local museum for any booklets which focus on English.

Barnicoat, J, *Newspapers and Conservation*, English Heritage, 1994. ISBN 1-85074-511-0.

Corbett, P, and Morse, B, *My Grandmother's Motorbike: Storywriting in the Primary School*, Oxford University Press, 1999(reprint). ISBN 0-19-918291-4.

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History and the Use of Language, QCA, 1997. KS1 and 2 (ref:COM/96/646/H) or KS3 (ref:COM/96/656). Available from P.O. Box 99, Sudbury, Suffolk. CO10 2SN

Lewis, M, and Wray, D, *Writing Frames*, EXEL (Nuffield Extending Library project), 1998, ISBN 0-704-91064-0. Available from University of Reading, Reading and Language Information Centre, Bulmershe Court, Earley, Reading, RG6 1HY. Fax: 01189 316801.

Maddern, E, *Storytelling at Historic Sites*, English Heritage, 1992. ISBN 1-85074-378-9.

Morris, S, *Using Portraits*, English Heritage, 1989. ISBN 1-85074-321-6.

Hicks, A, and Martin, D, The EACH project: *Teaching English and History: Reading and Writing Historical Fiction*, Dorset County Council, 1994. Available from School Effectiveness Service, County Hall, Dorchester, Dorset. DT1 1XJ

Videos

Role Up, English Heritage, 1995. 30 mins. Intended to increase confidence in using role play techniques. Follows teachers as they try out role play with a mixed ability class before visiting an historic site.

English Heritage videos can be borrowed on free loan. See our *Resources* catalogue.

Audio

Storytelling at Historic Sites, English Heritage, 1992. 2 x 90 minute tapes. Twenty stories set to music ranging from Greek myths, iron age, Roman, Celtic, Saxon, and Viking tales to medieval and Stuart stories.

Acknowledgements

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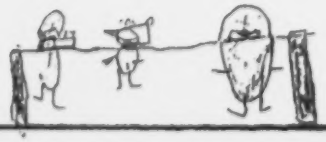
Sean

In medieval times they did not have baked beans and today we do not have peacocks or boars heads. They did not have electric cookers they had spits and cauldrons and fires.



Most out-of-school visits involve English work of some kind, whether it is taking notes which need to be edited and written up in class, or in purposeful listening and talking within groups and to others. This book goes further by looking at how sites can be used as a stimulus and context for creative and language work. The emphasis is on ideas and suggestions which are adaptable to most age ranges.

Written by Fiona Collins, formerly an advisory teacher, now a professional storyteller with wide experience of using historic sites, and Liz Hollinshead, an Education Officer with English Heritage. This book is one of our *Education on Site* series, suggesting educational strategies for the use of historic landscapes, sites and buildings.

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